



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2021

4,307: Qualitative Methods

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Central - Written examination (100%, 90 mins.)

Examination time: inter-term break

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[4,307,1.00 Qualitative Methods](#) -- Englisch -- [Dingwerth Klaus](#)

[4,307,2.00 Qualitative Methods: Exercises](#) -- Englisch -- [Plappert Sebastian](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

The lecture is a compulsory course in the BIA programme and mainly targets students enrolled in that programme.

Learning objectives

- Students know and understand key differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs as well as their respective advantages and disadvantages.
- Students know and understand the most widely used qualitative approaches to social research.
- Students know and understand the main methodological challenges qualitative research designs confronts, and they are familiar with the major options to address these challenges.
- Students are able to correctly identify and reflect the methodological approach of the qualitative studies they read, and to critically assess how well the authors of the study have managed to address typical methodological challenges for such studies.

Course content

The aim of this course is to make students familiar with the fundamentals of social science research. In particular, the course introduces students to the motivations, possibilities and limitations of so-called 'qualitative' research designs and methods, with the help of which researchers seek to generate knowledge through studying one or a few cases in depth. To achieve these aims, the course is structured into three major parts: description, explanation, and interpretation. At the end of the term, students will know different qualitative research designs (as well as their potentials and limitations) and be familiar with standard challenges of doing qualitative research. Moreover, they will be able to think critically about designing their own studies, e.g. when writing their bachelor's theses.

Course structure

The course consists of nine lectures and three tutorials. The fundamental challenges of 'small-n' research designs will be discussed as a part of the lectures. Their understanding will be further deepened in the tutorials where we examine the methodological approaches of specific qualitative studies. The required reading for this lecture will be made available via Canvas/StudyNet and should be prepared by the students before each session. The final exam is a centralized exam. The exam encompasses the material dealt with in the lectures, the tutorials and the required reading. Its aim is to test whether students have adequately understood the fundamental problems, themes and debates in relation to causal inference and interpretation, specifically the challenges of 'small-n' research designs and whether they are able to apply this knowledge to the qualitative studies they read.

Course literature



The required reading for this course will be made available via StudyNet. In addition, I recommend Joachim Blatter and Markus Haverland's textbook *Designing Case Studies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

Additional course information

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in Spring Semester 2021, the course information listed above will be changed as follows: The course is conducted online via the platform Zoom. The course will be recorded. Recordings of the course are available for 30 days. The lecturer informs via Canvas/StudyNet on the changed implementation modalities of the course. There are no changes necessary to the examination information.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/1)

Examination time and form

Central - Written examination (100%, 90 mins.)

Examination time: inter-term break

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Extended Closed Book

The use of aids is limited; any additional aids permitted are exhaustively listed under "Supplementary aids". Basically, the following is applicable:

- At such examinations, all the pocket calculators of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and mono- or bilingual dictionaries (no subject-specific dictionaries) without hand-written notes are admissible. Any other pocket calculator models and any electronic dictionaries are inadmissible.
- In addition, any type of communication, as well as any electronic devices that can be programmed and are capable of communication such as notebooks, tablets, mobile telephones and others, are inadmissible.
- Students are themselves responsible for the procurement of examination aids.

Supplementary aids

No supplementary aids; pocket calculators are not necessary.

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

The final exam includes a centralized written exam. The written exam encompasses the material dealt with in the lectures, the tutorials and the readings assigned as required reading for the lectures and tutorials. The aim of the exam is to test whether students know and understand the fundamental problems, themes and debates in relation to explanatory and interpretive "small-n" research designs, and whether they are able to independently apply them to the social science studies they read.

Examination relevant literature

All Texts designated as required reading for this course on Canvas/StudyNet until the final week of the course are relevant for the written exam.



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 12 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 28 January 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 14 (Thursday, 8 April 2021).